DevDoodle

A developer network

Project goals and scope

Core principles

DevDoodle aims to be both a programmers' network, in which programers can share their code, get feedback, and learn from each other, and a lasting repository of programming knowledge that can be utilized by many people after the content is created. To facilitate both of these goals DevDoodle development is guided by these principles:

Positive community

DevDoodle will be maintained by community processes. Rather than having a means by which to connect to specific other people one may already know or setting up explicit mentor-mentee relationships, DevDoodle aims to cultivate a community structure in which individuals can draw knowledge and help from a broad source.

Quality & reward system

It's important for websites driven by user-generated content to be able to effectively sort content and encourage high-quality contributions. DevDoodle will do this with closely-tied voting and reputation systems. By incorporating machine learning algorithms and user feedback to the filtering and weighting of content, DevDoodle will make sure high-quality helpful posts will be shown to many users and users won't have their time wasted on useless content. Users who create high-quality content will also be given additional privileges as a reward, to incentives good community behavior. Just-in-time user interface patterns and negative consequences will be used extensively to discourage leeching off of the community and generating off-topic or unhelpful content.

Explicit Sectioning

DevDoodle is divided in to distinct sections that focus on different key areas and modes of communication. To maintain focus and utility, each has different norms and expectations for use. While casual conversation is allowed in chat, unfocused and off-topic content is not tolerated in other sections of the site.

Target Market

The target market for DevDoodle is student and young professional programmers who are devoted to learning new skills and are already at least somewhat skilled.

Project Scope

DevDoodle aims to maintain a community that both interacts and learns from itself internally, and produces lasting content with utility to both community users and outside search engine users. To facilitate this goal, DevDoodle is divided into sections:

Learn

The Learn section is the primary section where users can learn new programming skills. The Learn section focuses on tutorial-based learning. There will be several official lessons that have been reviewed for quality and are featured on the learn page, in addition to user-submitted lessons created with the course creation tool. Users may create their own lessons for their peers, which, if they meet quality standards can become official courses. Courses are made from multiple tree-structured or sequential lessons, of which each lesson is composed of multiple slides. Each slide is an HTML page with explanatory content, a code playground, and a code validator. Users will try to solve a challenge presented in the explanation and a validator script will evaluate their code and determine if they have successfully completed the challenge.

Create

The Create section hosts user programs for users to share their work and gather feedback. Currently supported are HTML/CSS/JS-based programs and *canvas.js*-based programs that use a simple library to interface with the HTML canvas context. There is a web-based IDE with syntax highlighting, real-time execution, and key bindings to allow users to easily write their programs and for others to see and edit them. Users can modify a program and save a new personal copy of it called a fork. Further collaborative tools, perhaps a real-time editor, are being considered for future addition.

Q&A

The Q&A section is for building a list of solutions to common problems. There can be one *general reference* question per tag, which is a comprehensive overview of the technology of the tag. These general references will link to specific questions on the site in addition to off-site resources. Non-GR questions will be forced to be specific and detailed, as most other questions will already be covered by the GR question. All questions should attract long and comprehensive answer, and multiple answers if there are multiple ways to accomplish the task.

Chat

Chat is a informal, less-focused part of the site where users can talk about industry news, engage in meta-discussion about something on the site, or get help with their specific problems. Chat will help build a community, but will not be an essential focus of the site.